
COMMENTS ON FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICES

- I used to ride my bike around until my neighbors told me I shouldn't. I've called the police a few times about rowdy kids in my neighborhood with no response. The buses in our area are driven by inconsiderate drivers, who have cut right in front of me on several occasions. I think the City has one of the fastest responding fire departments.
- Five years ago, I called 911 for EMS and it took almost one hour for the police to come, and when they arrived they had no training and no supplies. They in turn called for an EMS unit, which is what we asked for in the first place. This took an additional 15 minutes. The EMS unit was a rust bucket. When I found my 15-year old son he was alive, but he is now dead. He was an honor roll student. Response time as well as equipment is a horrible mess.
- Police and Fire Department employees are not volunteers. You do not pay them enough. Stop wasting money downtown. Help the community by cutting trees and lighting streets. It would help to see what I was driving on. Why don't police officers follow tow trucks hauling junk cars between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. to catch them dumping junk cars onto our streets?
- Detroit police officers set a horrible example. They blatantly run red lights and firefighters are no better. We use Wayne State Police for everything, because we feel the Detroit Police Department is poorly run, with low regard for our City and with terrible leadership and morale. I simply do not trust Detroit's leadership.
- Our neighborhood is very dirty with garbage cans in front of homes or in the street. Vacant lots also have piles of garbage. I have begged for more than thirteen years to get the sidewalk in front of my home replaced. The City's tree pushed it up. The tree is not trimmed and it touches my house. It is all very frightening for a handicapped senior citizen. Also, unsanitary conditions in our neighborhood are bad for my health. I have to stay in and keep all windows and doors closed. The 311 phone number is worthless, nothing ever comes from any reports called in to that service. It is a stalling tactic to make us feel something is being done. The people that answer the phones are rude. Most fire hydrants are not working, therefore there is no water to fight a fire.
- I don't mean to be so negative about so many areas but your descriptive words didn't fit some situations. Overall, I generally feel safe but I'm always looking over my shoulder. City services vary from area to area with some better and some worse. Problems include vacant buildings, poor roads, unmowed vacant lots, poor bus service, trash/litter on streets, poor lighting, and safety because I have been a victim of crime (e.g., theft) 8 to 10 times. Fire trucks respond quickly to my home but I hear about poor equipment and response in other areas of the City. In terms of police response, it appears that because they're short staffed they have to make decisions about what to respond to, which doesn't always coincide with my concerns or those of the public.
- Overgrown shrubs, abandoned cars, and illegal dumping are constant problems which increase the danger for little kids that play in the alley. Another problem reported several times but not acknowledged is the dumping of half-filled gas tanks, which are a potential danger to the whole area if someone decides to ignite one.

- My feeling on police is that they are rude when they are talking to citizens in any kind of way. If they come into your home they may walk through it, and call you a liar. In the winter, they refuse to wipe their feet when entering. If in a police car, they are very rude and will tell you to shut up. I called the police because there is a drug house on my street, and young males refuse to move when you are driving down the street. In the summer, kids from other neighborhoods turned the water on and left it on. I called the Fire Department but they never responded. City workers, such as police, City hall, and others provide poor services. Also, I receive mail between 4 and 7 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays and from 2 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, which is very poor service.
- The Police Department takes too long to respond for anything. If you say there is a gun pulled at children they respond in a short time. The Fire Department is very responsive but when the EMS responds they seemed confused by the neighborhood, and when they do finally arrive they are in a hurry to leave. Garbage removal is very good. We've talked to them and they are very pleasant and respectful people.
- With the drug traffic, bad youths, and vandalism, the City needs a curfew or something. Noisy vehicles shake the ground. We need a ban on fireworks. There is junk on the streets and in the back yards, including stolen cars and trucks. The alleys need cleaning and removal of weeds, junk, etc. Homes here were kept beautiful years ago, before disaster came in. Also, there is speeding during the day and night. Since the community has changed over the past ten to twenty years, it has been awful. I'm planning to leave soon.
- In general, the downtown area I live in is in pretty good condition. However, responses to repair needs takes weeks. Police and Fire responses are excellent in emergencies. The police mini station in the Seventh precinct is good. It is impossible for the City to keep up with sloppy citizens. Why can't a citizen sweep their own sidewalk or shovel the snow from it. Detroit needs to educate its population on what it takes to make a good citizen.
- Traffic lights go out and take days to repair. Streetlights go out for months before anyone looks at them, even after being notified. Vacant lots go without mowing for long periods, and weeds are allowed to grow along the curbs. Sewers, light poles, and fire hydrants are neglected and provided no preventive maintenance. Street cleaning and alleyways are poor. Snow removal is horrendous when sidewalks are covered with snow from the street, side streets are blocked, driveways are blocked, and pedestrians are forced to walk in the street.
- The City needs to hire more people. The Fire, Police, and EMS Departments are very understaffed. That's why response time is very poor, not to mention the outdated equipment they have. Mayor Archer (Good Riddance) has just announced that the City of Detroit will not give its employees a new contract and raise. Something is wrong here. The neighborhoods have been neglected for decades. The downtown area is the only place that seems to be benefiting. The City of Detroit has plenty of money. It can take care of those problems and more. The money just doesn't make it there. We will be moving out in the next few years, mainly due to the school system, but that's another matter. Thank you.
- With the exception of two things, the six years I have lived in the City have been fairly good. The two bad things were the theft of my car out of my driveway and the response time of the Fire Department to sparking power lines during a heat wave.

- The following lists some of the City's problems: 1. Conditions of streets are deplorable. 2. The infrastructure is obsolete. 3. There are no shopping districts. 4. There is a lack of representation. 5. Residents are over taxed. 6. The City needs more streetlights. 7. There are too many abandoned homes. 8. Too many fire hydrants don't work. 9. Much of the fire equipment is old. 10. The parks are full of dope. 11. Buses don't run on time and are dirty. 12. There are no covered bus shelters. 13. Although EMS personnel are well trained, there are too few units. 14. The employees of the Fire Department are well trained, but there are too few firefighters. 15. The Police Department is wasted. 16. City information is too hard to access.
- We live in the Ninth precinct. We need more police and fireman plus their equipment. There is too much running of red lights in my area. People are always speeding on residential streets and on the City's expressways. In my neighborhood, people don't respect others, concerning noise from radios, cars racing on side streets, loud parties and music, and throwing papers, etc. on streets and yards. Don't we care enough to keep litter picked up ourselves?
- The Police Department needs more officers who are better educated and trained and receive better pay. We also need better response time and more officers to patrol neighborhoods for loud music and to strengthen the neighborhood watch programs. The Police and Fire Departments also need better equipment and information systems. City of Detroit residents should pay a fee for Belle Isle, and nonresidents should pay one dollar more to use Belle Isle to keep youths off the Isle after hours.
- Advertise or make known through the neighborhoods, the various services, programs, and activities that are available at fire stations and recreation centers. We can't take advantage of an outreach program if we don't know it's there for us. Volunteering to maintain a vacant lot is not a problem but these lots should be fenced in and police patrols of the neighborhood should be more frequent. Police should be more visible. The survey questions were answered with respect to the neighborhood I just moved from, not the one I live in now, although I haven't seen any police around here. There are no parks, fire stations, outreach programs, etc. nearby, in either area in 3 or 4, that offer services.
- The City's publicity needs to improve. We never hear any good things about Detroit. Many people don't know about what the City has to offer. They are not aware of how to report problems to the proper authority. For example, during a storm the wires behind my house were on fire and I called 911 and was told to call the Fire Department. I then called the Fire Department and was told to call Edison. I called Edison and had to push so many numbers and listen to several recordings to get a response. Imagine my frustration. On top of this, I was on my cell phone that wasn't fully charged. We were the last to have electrical power restored in our neighborhood. Also, I would like to know who to call when the neighbors put bulk trash out the day after bulk pickup.
- There was a fire at my father's house. The house burned down completely. Arson was suspected and two men were arrested. Still to this day, no one has told me what the investigation results were. There was not enough water pressure to fight the fire. I have been devastated by this event.
- I did not know that the Fire Department had community programs. I'm especially concerned about empowerment zone monies to help maintain home repairs that were promised to homeowners. However, due to severe restrictions, most of us don't qualify.

- I called for EMS for my mother in 1990, because she was dying and they hung up on me. I had to call a private ambulance. When I called Mayor Young's Office about this matter, they did nothing.
- My husband is sick. I have heart failure and every time EMS comes out they want to take me to Grace Hospital. Take me to Oakwood or Henry Ford. Why does this rule have to apply when you have insurance. We are seniors who have worked all of our lives. We are 80 to 85-years old. We love the City of Detroit. Please, give us the best. Thank you.
- In my neighborhood, in front of Webster Elementary School, on the corner by Porter Street, you have women standing on the corner selling themselves. Also, they sell illegal substances. Remember, all this is happening in front of the Webster Elementary School. They also mess with City property, such as, fire hydrants and the last three houses on the corner of Twenty-fifth and Porter Streets. Send the FBI, quick! Please, we're begging because they're ruining the neighborhood. We have crack heads and bums sleeping in the alley and showing their penises to little kids.
- The City needs to hire more EMS drivers and medical staff. In my area we have a lot of police in sight, but getting help to a sick or dying person is a joke in my neighborhood. Have City workers attend some kind of programs annually to learn how to treat people kindly. They have very nasty attitudes!
- Toilets on Belle Isle should be cleaned more often. At the end of a weekend afternoon they are despicable. What happens to the casino money? I would ride the buses if they ran more often. I called the Fire Department to get a fire engine at a children's picnic six weeks in advance, but it never came and no one called to say why.
- Although I feel fairly safe in my neighborhood, there are a few problems such as gunfire most nights, prostitution on the corner where I live, abandoned cars in the back parking lot, and no sign of police cars at 5 o'clock in the morning when I have to catch the bus. Still I've witnessed police, fire, and EMS workers being there for many others. Thank you.
- The major problem I have is the abandoned cars that are set on fire. The Fire Department puts them out but the burnt-out cars stay there for weeks. The police are no help. I have called numerous times. All I get is the run around. At the time of this writing, there is a burnt-out van in my alley on Amherst that has been there for three weeks.
- If you live in the City of Detroit you're not treated as a citizen. Only if you live in the suburbs, do you get quick police protection, fire protection, snow removal on side streets, neighborhood parks, recreation centers that are clean, and so much more. Also, car insurance costs less. What happened to the City of Detroit Schools? It's sad.
- There should be a method of having a fire hydrant moved from the base of a driveway. Some homeowners would be willing to pay for such a service. I am sure moving it a few feet would be affordable. This would provide a necessary service to City residents.
- The City needs to restore streets, improve street drainage, trim trees, provide more streetlights, and update fire hydrants. Sidewalks are broken because of tree roots. Also, some trees are pushing the electric wires up because they are too tall. Police, Fire, and EMS services are fine.

- Overall the City's situation is getting better, but the police surveillance needs to be boosted up. Also, cutting off the streetlights and leaving portions of the City dark is not good when people are catching buses to get home. The response time for Detroit Edison after a storm is bad when a downed line is in your yard, and all your calls go unnoticed. The wait was two days before they cut the power. Thank God. The Fire Department came out and roped it off and tried to wait with us.
- As someone who has lived in the suburbs, moved to the City of Detroit, and is now moving back to the suburbs, I have seen differences. I have also seen how other major downtown areas deal with public transportation, namely Chicago. I know things will not change, but many areas need changing. In my first month living in the City, my car was stolen and vandalized. Ambulance technicians are over worked and under paid in a pseudo military managed medical system that breeds the "not my job" outlook. Police officers make a very poor wage for what they deal with everyday.
- A few months ago there was an accident at Courville and Cornwall Streets and I called 911 and told them that a car had rolled over. It was upside down and I felt an EMS squad was needed. They did not send an EMS squad and fifteen minutes later the police arrived and asked if an EMS squad was really needed. I said yes, the girl in the accident was three months pregnant, had a possible broken wrist, and had a pulse rate of 104. I don't think an EMS squad ever showed up. I also wish the police would do more about the noise in the neighborhoods.

- The following was included in a letter to the EMS Division of the Detroit Fire Department: This is in regards to the recent transportation service my daughter received from your department. I must say that I am very disappointed and angry about the type of treatment we endured from your staff on September 18, 2001.

In life threatening situations, every second counts, right? A member of my family called for an ambulance and it took at least thirty minutes for the EMS squad to arrive. My fifteen year-old daughter has a very serious internal condition which has taken a toll on her, both physically and emotionally. She has had three major surgeries all on an emergency basis within the past year. This most recent event was her fourth surgery, which required a ten-day stay in Children's Hospital. Your paramedics took her to Oakwood and she had to be transferred to Children's Hospital.

When we called, my daughter was in excruciating pain. When the ambulance finally arrived after several calls, she was screaming loudly due to the tremendous amount of pain caused by her condition. Your driver asked me, "why is she screaming so loud"? He explained that he had picked up several patients with much more serious conditions who were never as loud as she was. I was appalled and saddened that a paramedic would minimize my child's plea for help to some kind of plea for attention. I may be wrong, but this is what I gathered from his ignorant statement. He may as well have told her to shut up, so he could concentrate on driving. In your profession, one would think a paramedic would have to be caring and empathic individual. Obviously, this was not the case.

To add insult to injury, the second paramedic said something that will live with me for the rest of my life. Once we arrived at the hospital and they were removing my daughter from the ambulance, I heard her say to another medic, "Is she retarded or what"? This was the last straw and it took everything within my being not to strike this woman. I had to ask her if she was retarded, to have made such a comment like that. What if my daughter really were retarded, is this the type of treatment she would receive?

When you have the public depending on paramedics to help save lives and assist patients on their arrival to a hospital, one would expect a trained professional to arrive for assistance. If this has happened to my family, I can't imagine the number of families in crisis situations who may have had the same horrendous experience as myself. Your employees are truly endorsing the notion that 911 is a joke.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Oakwood Hospital to inform them about the type of treatment their patients are receiving from your employees. I also hope this letter prompts an investigation into your employees' social skills when dealing with injured patients and their families. Apparently, they skipped the course of human compassion, as clearly my daughter wasn't given any.

Your assistance and/or comments regarding this situation would be greatly appreciated. I hope this deplorable behavior will not be tolerated in your department anymore.

- I have never heard who my neighborhood police officer is. More information is needed on the fire department's outreach area.
- On September 30, 2001, I needed the police because of a fight and it took forty minutes for them to arrive. I called the 311 number and no one answered. I called three times and still no one answered. Why is it that you never see the police on Belle Isle unless it is a disturbance. Why don't they walk the park and hand out trash bags. You talk about tree trimming, the only tree trimming I've seen is the garbage trucks trimming the trees.
- The reliability of the bus service is terrible, and is even worse when it gets cold outside. The buses are very crowded and uncomfortable, especially with school children. As for Police and EMS service, I find them very degrading, as when I called, they never showed up. Thank you for letting me voice my opinion. God bless everyone.
- I am not saying that employees of the fire or police departments are bad. I am saying the city needs to give these employees more encouragement and perks. Then they will know that risking their lives is not in vain. A concerned citizen.
- It is a shame that I am not aware of any community programs. I love Detroit, I can only hope and pray that our community will get better.
- It takes Detroit police and EMS too long to come out and provide services.
- The response time of the police has been good for me. However, I know in other areas it is very poor. The same goes for fire and EMS. I live very close to Harper Woods and Grosse Pointe, and when I want to go for a walk, I choose those areas first.
- You want people to be willing to volunteer to do the job of Police, Recreation, and DPW, why can't we all do our part. What do the tax dollars do? You can sit on my front porch all day and not see a patrol car go by. Working five to six days a week I can't get to the recreation center, Police Station, or Fire Station to inquire about programs and I haven't received any information via the mail or flyers delivered to my home. I have heard of other people in the city benefiting by programs and grants but you have to be in the click or something. I live next door to an abandoned house and the garage has fallen on my fence. There are two others on my block and they have been there over three years.
- You need more EMS units to cover the demands of this city. If you were having a heart attack, would you like it if the 911 operator said that there were no units available? Only until the Mayor or his family needs an EMS unit will the city get more units. Life is precious and I hope we will try to preserve it.
- I work for the city. Our contract from 1998 has not been signed yet. This kind of thing should change. Houses burn down in this city everyday. How many? Let's call that number x. We should be tearing down x+5 houses everyday, just to catch up. The administrative levels of our Police and Fire departments are top heavy. We could easily cut budgets by streamlining the administrative level personnel, and by getting more cops back on the street and out of the precincts. I can't tell you how to solve crime problems in two lines, but I will say that it must begin with education. If we raise the level of education in our city, then we will automatically reduce the crime level. I'd make it a crime to be ignorant.
- I don't ride the buses, I don't need EMS, I have never called the police, I don't go to Belle Isle, and I don't go to any City parks.